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FM AMEMBASSY MANILA
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 5402
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RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHDC IMMEDIATE
RHOVQHS/COMSEVENTHFLT IMMEDIATE
INFO RHHMUNA/USPACOM HONOLULU HI IMMEDIATE
RUEHGV/USMISSION GENEVA IMMEDIATE 2302
RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK IMMEDIATE 0326
RUEHBS/USEU BRUSSELS IMMEDIATE
RUEHRO/USMISSION UN ROME IMMEDIATE
RUEKJCS/JOINT STAFF WASHINGTON DC IMMEDIATE
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC IMMEDIATE

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 MANILA 002140

SENSITIVE
SIPDIS

BANGKOK FOR USAID /OFDA REGIONAL ADVISOR A. DWYER
USAID FOR DCHA/OFDA R. THAYER
USAID W/ FOR ANE/AA AND DCHA/FPP
GENEVA FOR N. KYLOH
USUN FOR OFDA REP
BRUSSELS FOR P. BROWN
ROME FOR USAID/OHA H. SPANOS
SECDEF FOR SOLIC
JOINT STAFF WASHDC FOR J3/J4/J5
PACOM FOR J3/J4/J5
NSC FOR P. MARCHAM

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: EAID SOCI PREL KPAO SENV EAGR RP
SUBJECT: SUPERBLY EXECUTED U.S. MILITARY TYPHOON RELIEF EFFORT
WRAPPING UP IN PHILIPPINES

REFTELS: A) Manila 2136 B) Manila 2131 C) Manila 2125 D) Manila
2112 E) Manila 2098 F) Manila 2089 G) Manila 2070 H) Manila 2056 I)
Manila 2049 J) Manila 2046

"Couldn't Have Survived Without U.S."

¶1. (SBU) In recent days, both Philippine Foreign Secretary Alberto Romulo and Defense Secretary Gilberto Teodoro (concurrently head of the Philippine National Disaster Coordinating Council) communicated to the Ambassador their deep gratitude for U.S. disaster relief assistance in the wake of Typhoon Ondoy (reftel A). Both Secretaries concurred with the Ambassador's assessment that the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) could capably manage remaining relief work and that it was time for the highly successful U.S. military flood relief efforts to end. The Ambassador assured Secretary Teodoro that USAID efforts would continue and that the USG would remain engaged as the Philippines rebuilds after the worst flooding in forty years.

Lives Saved, Ties Strengthened, Expertise Demonstrated

¶2. (SBU) U.S. military personnel engaged in Typhoon Ondoy disaster relief efforts saved lives, improved interoperability and strengthened ties with Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) units, while generating good will for the United States. In the disaster's early days, the U.S. Joint Special Operations Task Force-Philippines (JSOTF-P) deployed land, sea and air assets to rescue stranded flood victims and ferry the injured to hospitals. As the number of Filipinos displaced by the calamity topped 700,000, the armed forces and government of the Philippines requested that U.S. sailors and marines arrive ahead of the already scheduled Philippines Bilateral Exercise (TALON VISION/PHIBLEX) to provide humanitarian relief. These personnel provided medical assistance to 4,500 patients, delivered over 28,000 food packs and distributed more than 700 boxes

of clothing to flood victims. Deploying heavy equipment diverted from PHIBLEX, U.S. troops also removed some 1500 cubic meters of debris and cleared almost three kilometers of Metro Manila thoroughfares. The U.S. military's fast, flexible expertise improved the lives of thousands of Filipinos and demonstrated the value of humanitarian assistance training.

USAID Remains Engaged

¶3. (SBU) USAID continues to work with the Philippine government, international organizations, donors and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) to coordinate on meeting immediate humanitarian assistance needs which are foreseen for the next three months. Additional grants to NGOs are still under consideration for relief efforts. USAID is currently taking into consideration UN assessments that show Typhoon Parma destroyed approximately 60% of the corn and rice crop in Northern Luzon. This area of the Philippines is known to be the number one corn producer and number two rice producer in the country, which will affect food availability in the rest of the country over the long-term.

¶4. (SBU) USAID is also currently reviewing its on-going portfolio of development programs to address issues that will arise in the recovery and rehabilitation phases. USAID's Health Team is working with the Philippine Department of Health to determine its priority needs. USAID's Education Team is coordinating with the Philippine Department of Education to assess the damage done to public libraries and schools. USAID is considering providing a donation of reading books and materials to these public libraries and schools in Metro Manila and surrounding areas. USAID's Energy and Environment Team is currently assessing Department of Environment and Natural

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Resources capabilities to address solid waste management and the extent that USAID can provide technical assistance.

Media Coverage of the U.S. Contribution Continues

¶5. (U) Print and broadcast media extensively covered President Obama's message of condolences to the Philippine people for the loss of life and property from Typhoon Ondoy/Ketsana. During October 8 radio and cable television interviews, the Ambassador noted that U.S. military personnel will transition from relief operations to joint U.S.-GRP military exercises (Talon Vision/ Philippines Bilateral Exercise) by Saturday October 10. The Philippines' premier daily, the Philippines Daily Inquirer, featured photos of the Ambassador and the head of the Philippines National Red Cross distributing relief supplies at an evacuation center in Quezon City, Metro Manila, while other dailies quoted the head of the Metro Manila Development Authority thanking U.S. troops for clearing roadways of flood debris.

Next Steps

¶6. (SBU) Barring unforeseen circumstances, it is likely that conditions will allow for a scaling down of U.S. military disaster assistance in the next two days. USAID will continue crisis and health counseling efforts, and utilizing the \$1.8 million in disaster assistance in the most productive way to alleviate suffering in the Philippines.

Kenney